

# **Project Assistance Completion Report (PACR)**

## **Support to Education Policy Reform in Guatemala – Phase I**

*Contract OUT-AEP-I-809-95-00034-00, Implementing Policy Change Project  
Task Order No. 809*

### **I. PROJECT SUMMARY**

Date of Authorization:	March 3, 2000
Project Assistance Completion Date:	March 29, 2001
Implementing Agencies:	Management Systems International
Total Amount Authorized:	\$ 780,909.00
Total Amount Obligated	\$ 700,000.00
Total Amount Expended:	\$ 559,579.13
Counterpart Contribution:	N/A

### **II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

#### Introduction

The Support to Education Policy Reform Activity (Policy I) was designed to contribute directly to USAID/G-CAP's bilateral agreement signed on August 27, 1999 with the Government of Guatemala: *Education policies and strategies that enhance gender equity and cultural pluralism are implemented*. This result was expected to be achieved by the Contractor by strengthening the capacity and commitment of the Ministry of Education (MOE) to implement reforms that increase gender equity and cultural pluralism in Guatemala. Complementary technical assistance was to be provided to civil society organizations (CSOs) to begin the process of enhancing their capacity for influencing government action in policy reform and building constituencies for policy change within civil society. The MOE, Consultative Commission for Education Reform (CCRE), and CSOs working to promote education reform issues were identified as principal partners for this Activity.

The principal deliverables identified by USAID/G as necessary for achieving the activity objective were:

1. Work Plan including plan for monitoring and evaluation;
2. Index developed for measuring increased participation of target CSOs in education policy dialogue;
3. Rapid Assessment of the Education Policy Reform process in Guatemala;
4. Training of key MOE and CCRE representatives in use and practical application of the analytical tools used in the Rapid Assessment;
5. Analysis and documentation of the sociopolitical environment for education reform policy work based on findings of the Rapid Assessment;
6. Two policy areas to be addressed in 2000-2001 identified with USAID/G;
7. Strategic plan for MOE and CCRE to manage education policy reforms that will focus on implementing the two selected policy areas. Address how the MOE and CCRE may work effectively with key CSOs to implement the strategic plan;
8. Strategic plan for CSOs to build a constituency for and promote the selected policy areas, including how CSOs may work effectively with MOE and CCRE to implement the strategic plan;
9. Data produced for reporting on USAID/G Education SO indicators;
10. Options Paper submitted to USAID/G for its continued strategic support to education policy reform from 2000 to 2003.

The Activity was designed to be coordinated closely with other components of USAID/G's efforts in education, particularly other policy reform support efforts such as the Public Awareness for Education Reform Activity.

#### Status of Completion

The Activity is complete and the terms and conditions of the Task Order have been met satisfactorily. Technical assistance was provided to partners. Overall objectives have been met to the best of the Contractor's ability. All deliverables listed in the Task Order Statement of Work have been completed with the exception of #7: *Strategic plan for MOE and CCRE to manage education policy reforms that will focus on implementing the two selected policy areas, including how MOE and CCRE may work effectively with key CSOs to implement the strategic plan*; and, #8: *Strategic plan for CSOs to build a constituency for and promote the selected policy areas, including how CSOs may work effectively with MOE and CCRE to implement the strategic plan*. These two deliverables were not submitted to USAID/G for several reasons including: 1) delay in start of activities pending the MOE's acceptance of the implementation strategies of the Activity; 2) the Contractor's perception that meetings with the MOE and CCRE regarding policies were not productive (see MSI Final Report page 8); and, 3) differing expectations between the MOE, CCRE, and Contractor for strategic plans (MOE and CCRE interested in development of a long-term National Education Plan rather than a plan to manage the reform process with stakeholders that the Contractor was offering). Upon reflection, it may have been that #8 was not a feasible deliverable given the nature of policy reform processes and the time required for the Activity to select solid CSO partners.

## Assessment of Achievement of Purpose

### ***Accomplishments and Contributions***

The main accomplishment and contribution of the Activity was the completion of the Rapid Assessment of Education Policy Reform in Guatemala. Consultations with USAID/G Mission Management and Education Technical Office identified two possible key policy areas for future USAID/G strategic support to education policy reform: 1) public education sector finance (quantitative increase and qualitative allocation) and 2) curriculum reform. The Activity provided USAID/G with an Options Paper that suggested these and other areas for continued USAID/G strategic support to education policy reform, through 2004, within the overall context of implementing education policies and strategies that enhance gender equity and cultural pluralism.

A second contribution that the Activity has made to USAID/G is the Index for measuring increased participation of target CSOs in education policy dialogue (USAID/G's second indicator for IR3).

The Activity trained MOE and CCRE representatives in the use of policy analysis tools.

## Lessons Learned

### ***Replicability and Sustainability***

Several lessons learned emerged from the implementation of the Policy Activity:

1. In order to develop replicable and sustainable activities, the Activity staff must establish strong relationships of trust and respect with stakeholder organizations and leaders. Links between those leaders and stakeholder organizations must be fostered early on in the Activity. Staff must be "neutral" on the issues and take care to be positive and supportive of national processes and leadership rather than focusing on their apparent weaknesses.
2. Strategic and careful selection of a manageable number of CSO partners should be undertaken to allow the Activity to provide tailor-made technical assistance and training. Tailor-made training enhances the chances of CSOs being able to replicate the use of tools and techniques with their local affiliates. A strategic and careful selection of partner CSOs combined with a rapid needs assessment to determine the areas of need, interest, actions taken, and degree of influence of CSO partners in policy reform enhance the impact of the Activity's technical assistance and training.

3. To increase the chances for making policy analysis and advocacy sustainable, an Activity should develop technical assistance and training that are flexible and dynamic (a set of sessions for organizations to select from with “take home” materials) and designed to meet participants’ needs, interests, and institutional abilities to act and influence policy reform. A training strategy that starts from where the individuals and organizations are and is designed to socially empower participants at the same time that political analysis skills are being developed, has potential for replicating skills that are sustainable beyond the influence of the Activity.
4. Having relevant technical assistance and training tools ready to use as requested by interested and capable stakeholders so that momentum is generated early on in the LOA and maintained throughout is important for increasing the chance that partners will replicate policy reform processes.
5. There are notable advantages to developing synergies with other relevant activities and projects and using the same products to reinforce the message and information communicated.

### ***Inputs to Design and Implementation of New Related Activities***

The Policy Activity provided insight for the design and implementation of new related policy activities. This includes:

1. Design and undertake a dynamic approach to education reform support that makes effective use of USAID lessons learned and best practices around the world as outlined in the Education Reform Support Series (Advancing Basic Education and Literacy: ABEL Publication).
2. Approach Activity strategic planning based on the understanding that data, analysis, and policy communication are the basic technical elements of education reform support.
3. Focus on reaching and working with specific audiences/stakeholders.
4. Train and provide technical assistance to these specific audiences/stakeholders so that they improve and expand their influence on those key policy areas that USAID, in consultation with partners, has identified to focus on.
5. Develop and carry out a comprehensive, strategic plan with clear identification of partners and audiences to integrate traditional public policy analysis with public policy dialogue, advocacy, awareness, political salesmanship, and to build institutional capacity that can use this integration strategically for purposeful reform.
6. Build in ability to respond to other stakeholders’ requests and opportunities that their actions present.

7. Consolidate and strengthen existing alliances and coalitions so that they can expand and intensify their nascent advocacy for education reform efforts in Guatemala.
8. Foster pioneering initiatives to bring communities, CSOs, CCRE, MOE together to implement reform (i.e., the MOE/CCRE *Diálogo y Consenso* effort), including strategic planning for realistic, long-term implementation of reform of education system.
9. Train and encourage emergent leaders to act in their own environments, especially GOG/MOE, CCRE, CSO and other stakeholder group leaders who are active and knowledgeable in education reform activities.

Lessons learned from this Activity suggest that new related USAID/G activities would benefit greatly from having expertise in data/information generation and communications marketing for development throughout the Life of Activity.

The impact of all education reform efforts and the work of all individual and organization leaders who promote specific policy changes will increase significantly when society is cognizant of the state of education in Guatemala. Public awareness of this state as well as its implications for each family and community, the factors that produce it, and solutions developed in reform-in-action are necessary before enough support is built to make significant progress can be expected in Guatemala. A dynamic approach to a large-scale public awareness campaign to get public opinion behind reform efforts is needed. USAID can facilitate this effort with its global expertise in social marketing and education reform support in partnership with public and commercial sector entities that are moving in this direction.

New communications-based activities should be designed to work closely with local partners so that the capacity of Guatemalan education partners to plan and carry out future social communication process in support of education reform is significantly enhanced.

### **III. FINANCIAL CLOSE OUT AND END-USE MONITORING**

See Attachments A and B.